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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4912  
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE  
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RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 3410  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFIUU/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 005864

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CR, S/CT, SCA/PAB, EUR/RPM  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE  
NSC FOR AHARRIMAN  
OSD FOR KIMMITT  
CENTCOM FOR CG CFC-A, CG CJTF-76, AND POLAD  
RELEASABLE TO NATO/ISAF/AUS/NZ

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PGOV AF

SUBJECT: PRT/SHARANA: GOA WEAKNESS IN THE FACE OF THE ENEMY

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Naka district, a remote district in Northeast Paktika province, came under control of insurgent/Taliban forces in early summer 2006. Irregular contract police forces recruited by Paktika's Governor Ekhpulwak regained control of the district later the same month. To date, no regular Afghan National Police (ANP) or Afghan government leadership have been permanently stationed in the district. The inability and refusal of Afghan police and government leaders to reoccupy Naka highlights the weakness of the ANP in Paktika and the lack of competent and determined leaders in the present provincial government. END SUMMARY

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GOA Presence Limited  
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¶2. (SBU) Naka, located in the wooded mountains of Paktika's extreme northeast, is a remote district in an area of strong Taliban and Haqqani influence. Naka was lost to insurgents on June 15. It was recovered in late June by former Taliban and Haqqani supporter Mohammed Akbar and thirty of his followers who had been deputized and were paid by Governor Ekhpulwak for this operation. On October 10, American military forces from Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Sharana and the State PRTOff visited Naka's district center in conjunction with Governor Ekhpulwak's visit the same day. The visit confirmed that Naka does not have any conventional Afghan government forces in the district. Instead, another old Mujahideen commander, Mohammed Jan Sidiqi, and 53 of his loyal followers have been recruited from neighboring Khost Province to serve as the district Commissioner and contract police in Naka.

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Lack of Safety Impedes Development  
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¶3. (SBU) Naka is a sparsely populated and mountainous district which has historically seen little Afghan government presence or influence under any Afghan government. Located in the Zadran tribal homeland shared by neighboring districts

of Paktika, Paktia, and Khost Provinces, Naka was at one time home to Jalaluddin Haqqani. That Taliban and Haqqani elements are still active in the area was aptly demonstrated on October 10, when the PRT ground convoy going to Naka was attacked by small arms and RPG fire as it entered the mountain pass leading to Naka from Zeruk. Governor Ekhpulwak arrived later that day, at the district center, by U.S. Army helicopter, addressed a crowd of some 300 local people, and met with elements of the District Tribal Shura. Only five of 12 District Shura members attended the meeting with the governor, and none of the district's famous and influential religious leaders were present. Provincial Chief of Police General Abdul Baqi Nuristani was also conspicuously absent. The Governor explained that, unless the people of Naka could guarantee the safety of contractors working for the coalition and the Afghan government in Naka, the district would get no development assistance. The Shura members present agreed and the Governor departed, by air, after three hours on the ground.

¶4. (SBU) Naka district has been one of Paktika's most difficult districts to secure. It was lost to insurgent forces this year along with Dila district in the far southwest of the province. Both were recovered this summer. Dila now has official Afghan police and a District Commissioner, and the District Tribal Shura has opened dialogue with the Provincial government and the PRT. The Head of the Dila Shura recently traveled to the PRT to request projects and food aid for the district. The difference between Dila and Naka is that the coalition has established a military base in Dila. The fact that no Afghan government civil administrator has been willing to take the job as Naka District Commissioner and that no serving Afghan

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police officer or patrolman has accepted assignment to serve in Naka is telling of the poor state of discipline, confidence, and leadership in the ANP and Afghan civil administration in Paktika province. The performance of Provincial Chief of Police Baqi, in refusing to send police officers and men to Naka district, and thus ignoring the security problem there -- and even refusing to travel to the district under U.S. military guard -- is troubling. This is unlikely to be reversed and Naka will likely remain a difficult district with strong ties to insurgent forces until the Afghan government or coalition forces garrison the district with military forces.

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COMMENT  
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¶5. (SBU) The failure of more than half of the district's Shura members to attend the Governor's meeting and the apparent refusal by the Naka religious community to heed the Governor's invitation is indicative of the government's lack of influence in the district. CSTC-A has an Afghan-led program to identify, remove and replace Afghan police unit commanders who have demonstrated the lack of will and ability to lead. PRToff sees a need for a similar program applied to Afghan provincial administrators, including the use of embedded trainers at provincial and district levels.

NEUMANN